I have been asked to be President of the PEN Club in succession to Wells: the - is about the greatest insult that could be offered a writer, or a human being.

17th July 220a

52 Tavistock Sqre.

1933

I was just sitting down to write to you last night when Julian came in to say that he had got the Chinese professorship! You will have heard from him - already. He seemed very excited, though also rather alarmed at the prospect. I wish it weren't for so long — though he says he can come back after a year. Still I suppose it's a great chance, & means that he will early get something in England afterwards. Leonard thinks it an extraordinarily interesting job as it will mean being in the thick of Chinese politics. Julian also felt this — what it means I don't know, nor I suppose do you. We had a long talk, & he was very charming, & said that he felt it was time he made a complete break. In the middle, Mrs Pearce rang up, but he said the permit as much upset as he expected. Evidently he's got a mass of things to do, & was going to see the Board again in order to find out more details. Such, it all was very upsetting: I shall see him on Friday, & try to find out more. He was still vague about the hours - the pay - & urged him to find out all about the climate & conditions - he's going to see Toynbee, who has been there; & also Margery. This is the most exciting news naturally. Otherwise I was going to tell you about the honours

of going to Bristol to open Roger show. Really the Fry — in the first place, it was bloody hot; then we lost our way & only got there just in time: then there was a large audience, all as the most stodgy & respectable: then they kept an Electric fan going so that I could hardly make myself heard— then I left in my bowler that neither Margery nor Pamela much liked what I said. In short it was all rather an absurd waste of time, energy. I felt — though I thought Roger pictures, as far as I could see them in the crowd, a good deal better than I expected. Margery never wrote & thanked me— & in fact I feel that the Fry view of Roger is completely different from ours, & I'm in rather a struggle to know what to do about seeing Margery before I go. I'm sure she'll disapprove of anything I write. Yet I feel the means to hurt me to it. Julian agrees — thinks her almost crazed on the subject, & advises me to keep clear of her: but how am I to? Anyhow, I feel sure she didn't like my innocent & highly eulogistic much for some reason. I've now been through both parcels of your letters, & I find that you had but a 1923 packet among the letters you gave me. Also there are 2 1922 packets. As the 1923 was the missing one, I suppose now nothing was lost — no thanks to the Foreign Office though: (I've just heard from the Post office that they have searched in vain).

I hear Quentin is back — he was doing such happy last night. Julian said. Both he & Julian, I hope, are coming on Friday to help us with Edith Sitwell & Ottoline: ~~I then~~ such is my penance; but I hope the last before we go to Rodmell next Thursday.

NYPL

2206

Lord what a mercy to be there, out of this racket & uproar!
Clive is giving a farewell dinner on Sunday. We have been an
appalling one to meet both old masters, Adelte Klein, one of the
most radoh faced bitter tongued women I've ever met. And
I must say Clive was good natured in the extreme. Ronald Brem-
her wife came in — a droid of pair, thought. & Ronald
apologising for his book. for what apologies are these. That
same night Flaxen Marshall, drunk with the Bustys,
was taken with child & removed in a stretcher: a boy, all
well, and I daresay you've heard.

This is a very dull letter, but it's been so hot. & I've
talked such a lot the past 2 days. my wits are roosting.
Twice I dreamt I was kissing Angelica passionately,

across a hedge. from which I can only deduce that in fact a Catechism subtracts in one breath. But neither the one nor the other come within a thousand miles when seeing Susie Buchan & Ethel Smyth - both of whom came here yesterday. Adrian is said by Julian to be obviously outrageously intone with Mrs. Luttrell, so that people laugh at her car in front of his sitting room window, in which, the room I mean, there's no light, except the bedroom lamp at the back. How I wish I could see you, even across a hedge. [NYPL] But I must write to Ethelbert. I wish Old Julian weren't funny: he's such an angel; but stuff, it's done him a lot of good, I see: Sickert was rejected — How are your Queen Mary paintings? I met Kauffer at the Hutchs. & he said that they were such ones, the architects, asking him to do Britannia with a shield, that he thought he should refuse. But those go in ok right. Now please write. We go to Monks House on the 25th. V.

HAMILL 2/10/68

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HAMILL 2/10/68

1935?

221

Monks House
Rodmell.
Monday

Well, this is very nice. That dolphin should be in town again, I think I'm afraid not to nice for the poor brute itself. I was beginning to write to you when the whole Eardale family broke in, & we had to spend the afternoon with them. Stephen Tennant who's staying at Piddinghoe, has already been round this morning — what can be done about people! — (I dont mean the Bells) However, what I was going to say was: if you want your tea set, it is in the Bathroom at 52: still packed in the box they sent it in. I hope you want it — if you want it, I shall not throw, they have a key in the Press.
The other China is here.

Also: have you got a copy of Rogers "Transformations"?
a spare one? I can't find mine, but so could
you lend me one? If not, I can easily get it
from the library. I'm afraid Ha is
going to be rather difficult — but I'll
keep that till we meet.

Let me know when & where.

B.

NYPL

HAMILL 2/10/68

1935

222

Sunday

Julian suggested a meeting
before he goes.
Would you & he dine
here on Tuesday – or if you'd
prefer it – should we dine
with you?
We have to go to Sissinghurst
but should be back by 8.
But don't do either if a bother. We
& Shall be out to lunch also on
Thursday.
Would you send a
line.

POST CARD

Mrs Bell
Charleston
Firle.
Lewes Sussex.

NYPL
HEMILL 2/10/64

Monks Horne,

Margery only arrives
rather late on Friday afternoon
& goes early on
Saturday, so I don't
think there will be
so much chance
of coming over.
But I'll tell her.
But of the invitation...
(Written in the
Car.)

Any news would be welcome. Is W. back? What about the Q. Mary-Chesterfield? Letter to the Times? Eddy Sackville? Life in general? We called in at Ringwood, & I showed L. the house, a dismal place, where Shelley sallied round the courtyard—

Monday
May ~~about~~ 11th [1936]

Becky Falls
Dartmoor.

the summer the Rossetti stayed with us.

Here we are, with the rain pouring, in the lodging where Leacock stayed with Lytton, Moore in the summer of 1912. The old lady says she remembers Lytton very well, as he used to sit in the Garden painting, & was stayed here for some weeks with his son. We rather think this may open to Duncan—yes, will be clear up the matter. There's no need for secrecy now. Our the old lady seems rather doddering. It's been roaring hot & fine: that is, after we left Weymouth, & came to Lyme Regis. Felt then as was sepulchral, like crawling under a grey umbrella: very cold & colourless. Then was disappointing, as I rather think Weymouth is the most beautiful Georgian town in Europe, combining the grace of Naples with the sobriety of George the Third. Why are all the West Country towns purely as they were in Jane Austen's day? Yesterday we had tea in an inn with an Adams fireplace & a ceiling like the very image of the one at 44

Rachel Square. We were extravagant, stayed at the best
hotel in Lyme, in which case the very pots were
fearned with camphor, & Ethel, Nan could scarcely
have added another touch. I find the company
most interesting: & get into touch with all the Tobacco
Ministers by means of their dogs. They begin to snore: then
leap to quarrels about names (morning & then we're off-
Asthma.) don't we have conversation can be splitting when
there isn't an arm chair without its old couple & all so
welcome & kind. You see, without my telling you, how
dark I am. Dark but content — save that there's no
dolphin to talk to, & that selfish marine monster
won't write. My only letter is from Ethel S.:
which begins with a protestation from the Mass & goes
on to say that Pan was put to sleep under the
Eucharium tree after breakfast. I had just sent her a
wire to congratulate her on the terrific Sutherland
about her book in all the papers. I think you ought to
read it. Considering the words like an old turkey cock
Scattering the gravel with its hind legs, the lecture of
Personings — Venn Lee, H.B.s is rather amazing.
Showers of grave flies, but there they are. I shall
try to imitate her technique when I write my
memoirs. There a waterfall here: & it
roars louder, louder. Also Mr. Galsworthy
lived in the next village. I went into his church, but no one
remembered him, except the postman. Tomorrow we go to
Falmouth. With love
Yours ever
Virginia

Hamill 6/1/66